



# VIEWS AND VISTAS

## The South Side of Bethlehem From a Distance

Architectural lighting is more than simply the illumination of individual buildings. The creation of a comprehensive cityscape is essential to give a unified image of the city to visitors and residents alike. The proper illumination of a city when seen from afar can help entice visitors into the city and increase revenue. It also instills a sense of pride in the residents who experience the city on a daily basis.

There are a number of ways to enter South Bethlehem. This report looks at four of the most prominent entryways that offer the most distinctive views of the city: the Hill to Hill Bridge, the Fahy Bridge, Lehigh University, and along Fourth Street from the east. Each of the descriptions offers a glimpse at what an observer might see while standing at each location, and how proper architectural lighting can enhance that vista.

Some of the taller, more prominent buildings can be seen in various vistas of the city. They are mentioned in this section multiple times, where appropriate. When seen from different views, the buildings are situated in different contexts and take on various meanings and levels of importance to that vista.



# VIEWPOINTS

## LEGEND

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-  From the Hill to Hill Bridge
-  From the Fahy Bridge
-  From Lehigh University
-  From St. Michael's Cemetery



Figure 4.1

## FROM THE HILL TO HILL BRIDGE

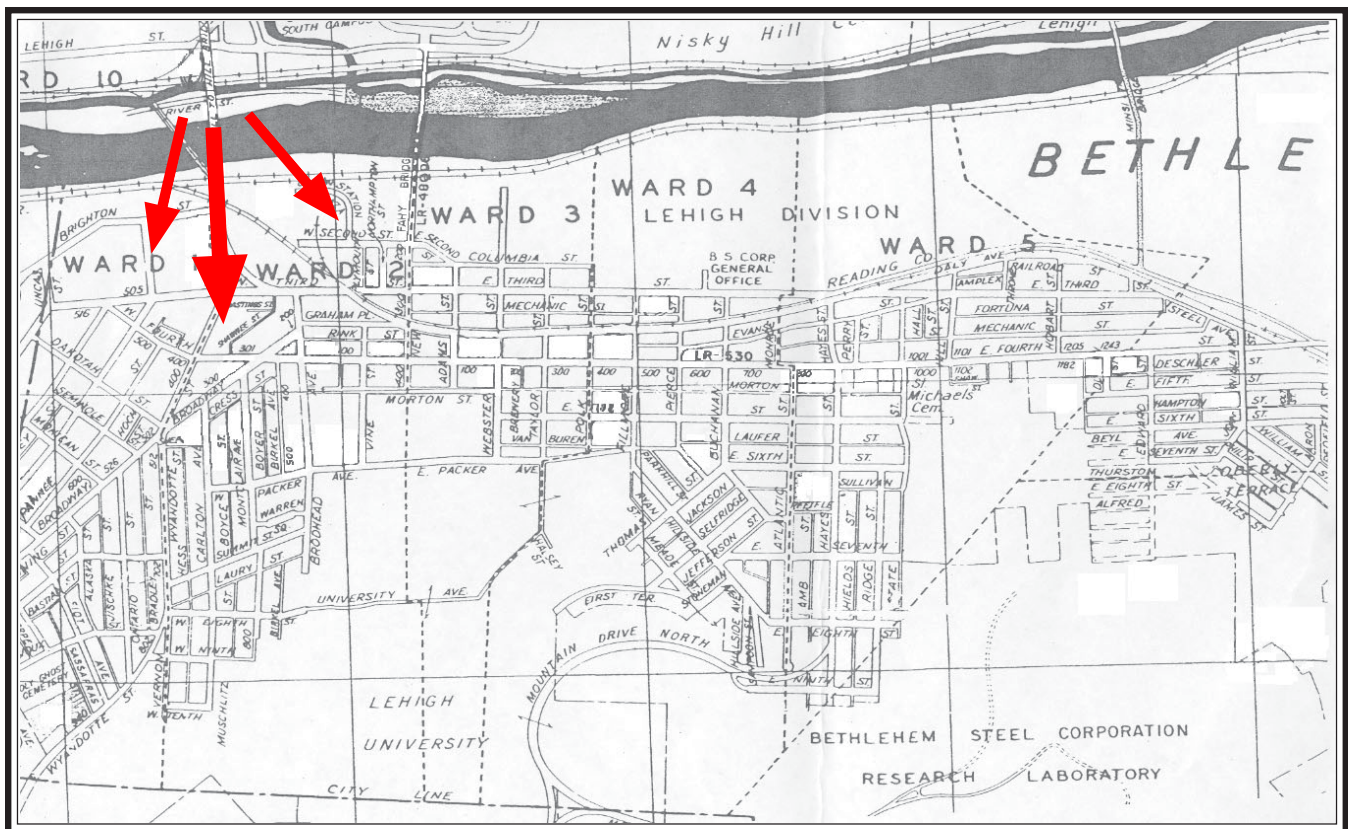


Figure 4.2

Coming into the city, visitors arrive at the bridge itself first. The lighting of the bridge should be distinctive, something to help persuade outsiders to get on the bridge and come across into South Bethlehem. The lighting scheme should be comfortable, not glaring; inviting, not offensive. Not only is the bridge used to draw visitors in, it is also a gateway to the city, and thus lends itself to giving an initial impression to all who pass under its steel girders.





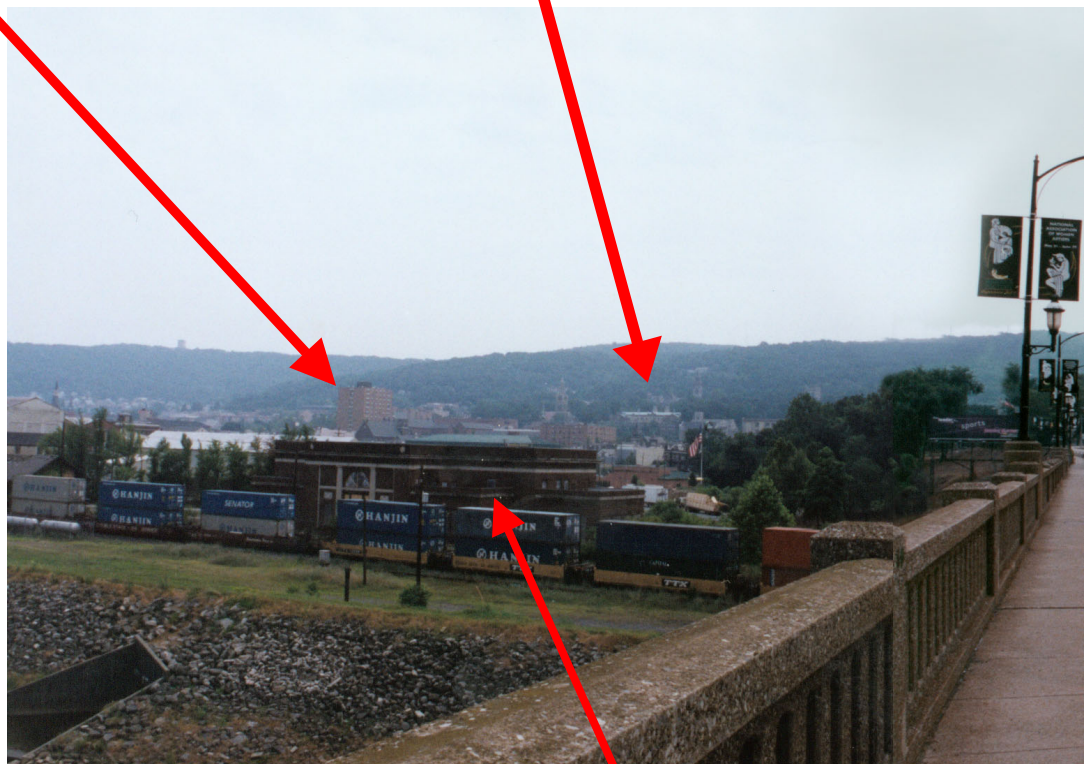
**Figure 4.3** *Rooney Building*

The size of this building sets it apart from its surroundings and establishes it as a landmark for the city. When seen from the Hill to Hill Bridge, this building acts as a point of reference, helping to orient visitors who are new to the city. Applying light to parts or all of the building would reinforce this role of orientation. However, due to the aesthetic nature of the building, intense illumination is not recommended.

Many of the University buildings can be seen from the Hill to Hill Bridge, scattered along the hillside. By highlighting some of the more architecturally significant campus buildings, a visual backdrop is created for nighttime viewing of South Bethlehem from afar. It enhances the vista and establishes the view as unique to the region, thereby giving more identity to the city.



**Figure 4.4** *Lehigh University*



**Figure 4.6**

Once this building is renovated (scheduled completion in 2003), Union Station will be a major part of the view from the Hill to Hill Bridge. The highlighting of this building can be greater than that of the Sayre and Wilbur Mansions and the Lehigh Valley Railroad Building. A brighter building will help draw attention to the left of the bridge (as one enters the city), towards the city itself. One lighting concept might be to highlight the top edge of the building, which is the most visible part from the bridge.



**Figure 4.5** *Union Station*





**Figure 4.7** *Cathedral Church of the Nativity*

When entering town on the Hill to Hill Bridge, the Cathedral Church of the Nativity is directly in front of all drivers. A brightly lit church will help to further draw visitors across the bridge. It is the focal point at the end of the bridge, the exclamation point to what the bridge has been leading up to. This church has already had some exterior lighting installed.

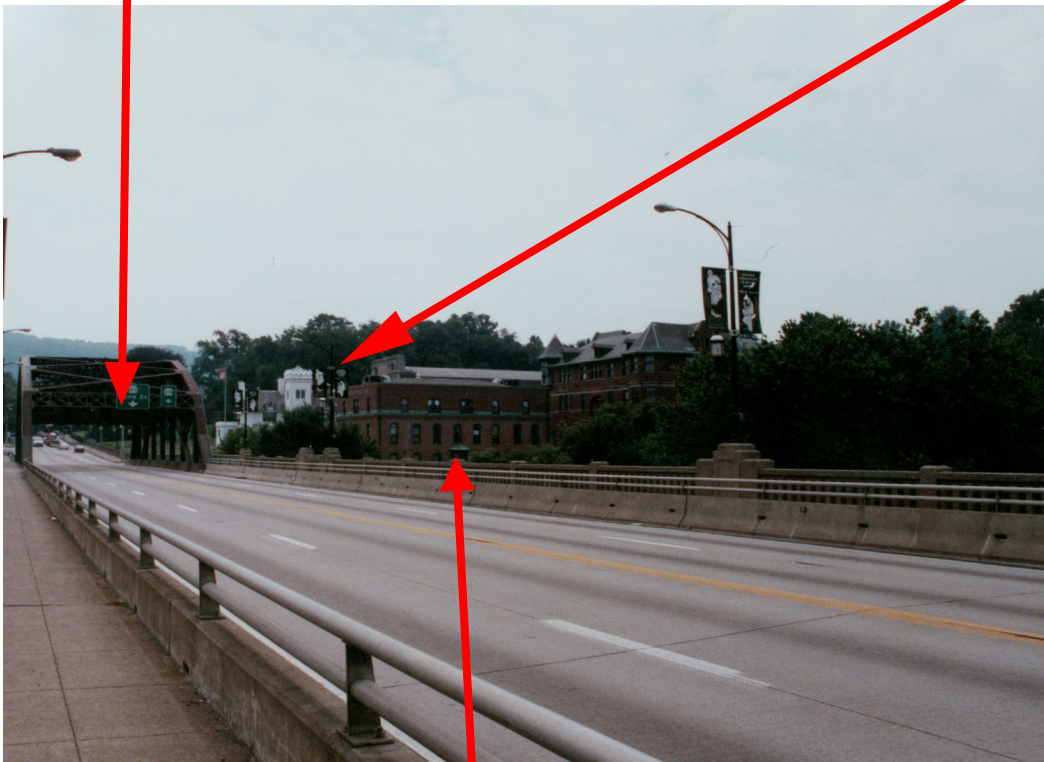


**Figure 4.8** *Sayre Mansion*



**Figure 4.9** *Wilbur Mansions*

These buildings along the side of the bridge can be given soft highlights, nothing drastic. Like the Lehigh Valley Railroad Building, the lighting scheme should not distract visitors from viewing the rest of downtown. It should briefly draw attention to the buildings, but not have such overpowering brightness to be offensive. Illumination of these buildings will help create a visual border and better distinguish the downtown area. Proper illumination of these buildings and the Lehigh Valley Railroad Building is important to leave a favorable last impression in the minds of visitors leaving the city via the Hill to Hill Bridge.



**Figure 4.10** *Lehigh Valley Railroad Building*

Coming across the Hill to Hill Bridge, the Lehigh Valley Railroad Building is the first major building one encounters. It is important to light this building so that a positive first impression of the city is given to visitors. The building requires a high quality lighting design accentuating the subtle details of the structure with soft light so as not to distract visitors from viewing the rest of town.







Figure 4.11

## FROM THE FAHY BRIDGE

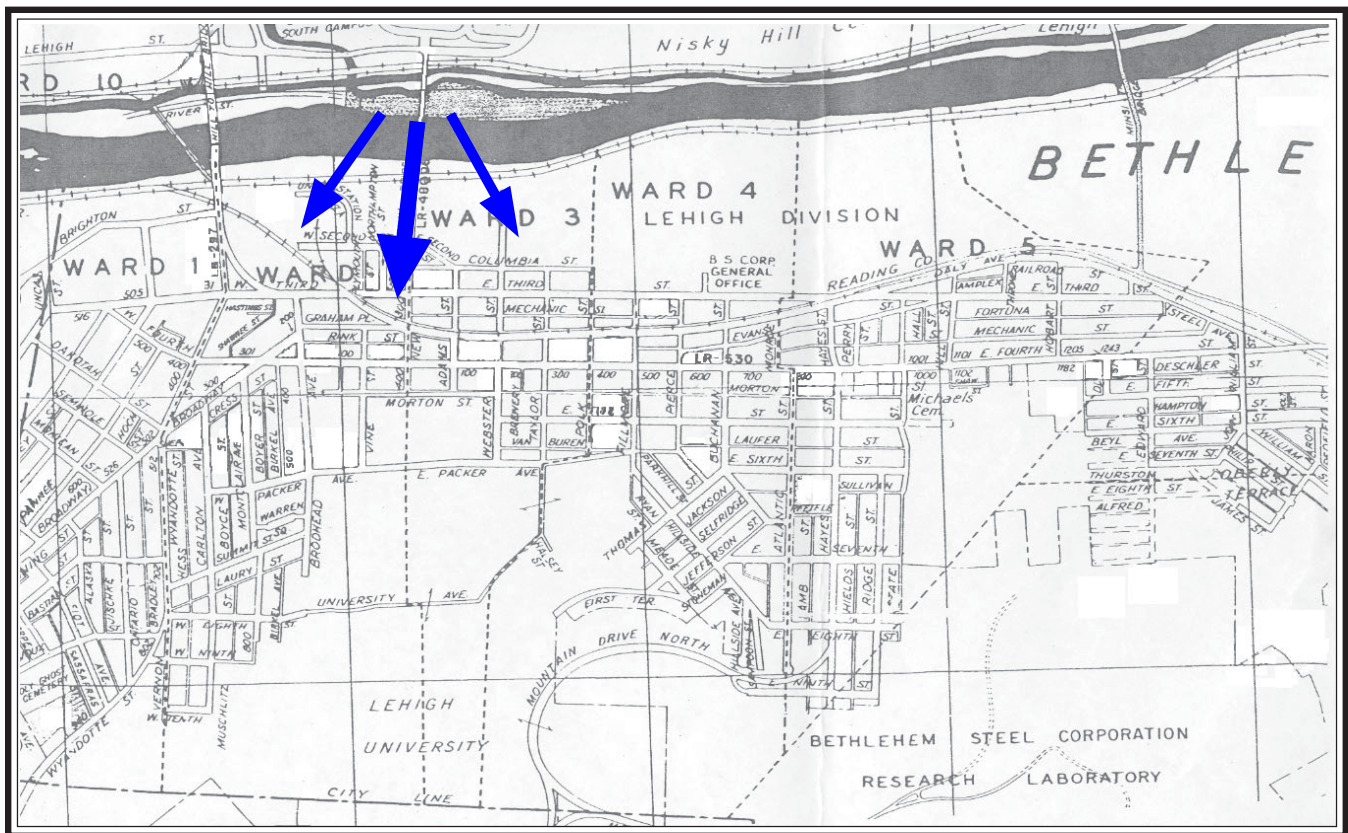


Figure 4.12

The Fahy Bridge is the major artery connecting the central downtown areas of North and South Bethlehem. Improving the nighttime view of the South Side from the Fahy Bridge may help entice people to cross the bridge from the north. The vista from the Fahy Bridge encompasses nearly all of the buildings on the South Side, so practically any facade lighting improvements that are made will be noticed from the bridge. As a major gateway to the South side, it is important to maintain an attractive view of the City from this location.



Driving across the bridge into the city, travelers will see the Rooney Building directly ahead of them. While it may not be the most architecturally or historically important building in the city, it is extremely prominent from this entrance to the city. Instead of highlighting the building itself, perhaps the flat, brick face of the façade could be used as a form of billboard to announce events and attract visitors from afar.

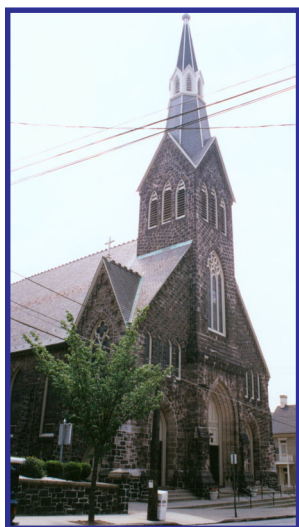


**Figure 4.13** *Rooney Building*



**Figure 4.14** *The Design Center*

While this building is not readily visible when coming over the bridge into the city, it is one of the last buildings visitors see on their way out of town. As such, it is important to use the building to provide a positive last impression on visitors. Highlighting elements on the front elevation can continue around the corner of the building to the elevation facing the bridge. The lighting will call attention to the building, and follow the visitors as they turn the corner and head across the bridge.



**Figure 4.15** *Holy Infancy Church*

Looking towards the left of the bridge, observers can see the tall, narrow steeple of the Holy Infancy Church. Accentuation of this steeple with light will help signal this structure as a landmark not only from the bridge, but also from numerous locations all over the city. Highlighting of some of its lower architectural features will add to the building's streetscape presence.



**Figure 4.17**



**Figure 4.16** *Beth Works*

When driving across the Fahy Bridge, the most prominent structure in an observer's immediate visual field is the Bethlehem Works property along the banks of the Lehigh River. In its current state, architectural lighting may not be appropriate for Bethlehem Works. However, with any future renovations, lighting should certainly be considered in order to properly display some of the most noticeable structures from this viewpoint.





**Figure 4.18** *Broughal Middle School*



**Figure 4.19** *St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church*

These two buildings are more aesthetically pleasing than the Rooney Building, and nearly as visible. In contrast to the Rooney Building, the structures themselves could be illuminated to help set them apart and further define the skyline. Floodlighting of the faces of the buildings will especially draw attention to them from the viewpoint of the bridge.

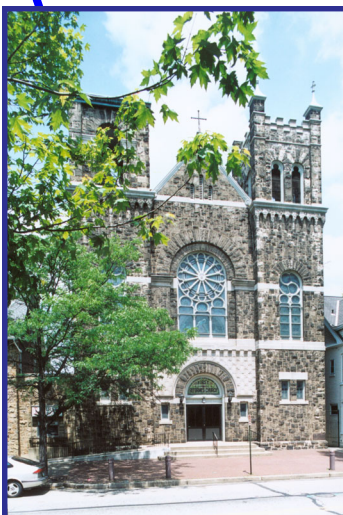


**Figure 4.20** *Holy Ghost Church*



**Figure 4.21** *Fritz Memorial United Methodist Church*

Near to the Flat Iron Building from the Fahy Bridge vista are these two prominent churches. While not overwhelmingly visible from the bridge, their presence could be increased by highlighting of the towers and rooflines. The lower parts of the structures not readily seen from the bridge could receive a softer light to help define the structures without being overpowering.



**Figure 4.22** *First United Church of Christ*

While it is not as visually prominent as the Rooney Building, this church is certainly visible from the bridge. The twin towers of the church can be highlighted on all sides or silhouette lit from within to be seen from the Fahy Bridge view of the city; the front façade can be illuminated to enhance the building's streetscape presence.

Looking towards the right of the bridge, observers can notice the distinctive form of the Flat Iron Building. The highly visible face could be floodlighted to increase its visibility and the concrete crown of the building could be highlighted with color or at a higher illuminance level in order to make the building stand out even more.



**Figure 4.23** *Flat Iron Building*









Figure 4.24

## FROM LEHIGH UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

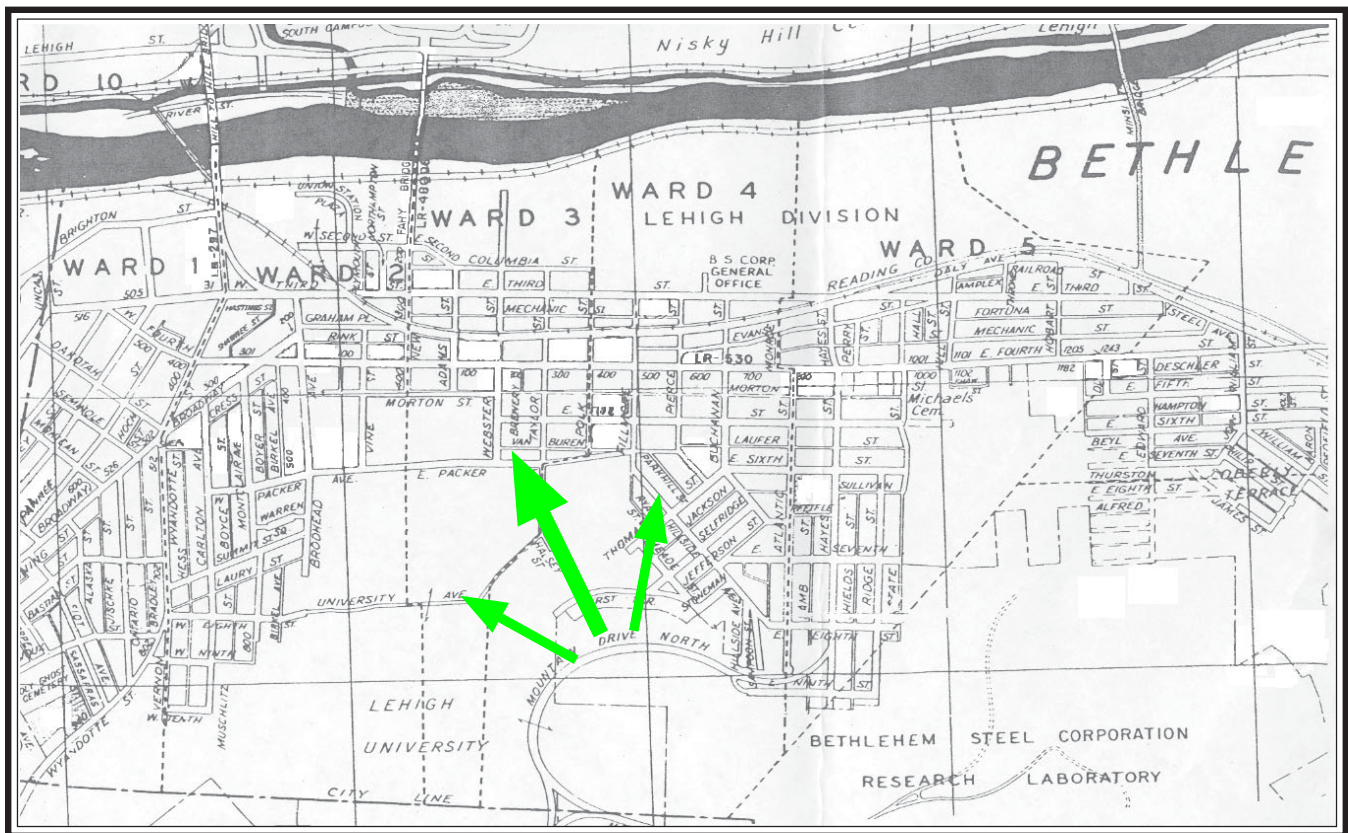


Figure 4.25

From many locations on campus, much of the view of South Bethlehem is blocked by trees. For this reason, the view of the city is better defined in cold weather months when trees have lost their leaves. At higher elevations, some buildings are visible year-round, particularly the upper parts of the buildings. Proper lighting of South Bethlehem's buildings, especially those on the town/gown border, will help attract the attention of University students, drawing them off campus into town.





Like the Hill to Hill Bridge, Union Station is very evident from higher elevations on the University campus. The lack of surrounding structures also helps make it stand out when seen from this viewpoint. Application of light to the front and top of the building will increase its nighttime presence. By illuminating the recently renovated structure, a greater awareness of local history is instilled in residents and visitors alike.



**Figure 4.26** *Union Station*



**Figure 4.27** *Lehigh Valley Railroad Building*



**Figure 4.28** *Sayre Mansion*



**Figure 4.29** *Wilbur Mansion*



**Figure 4.30** *Cathedral Church of the Nativity*

These four neighboring buildings punctuate the south end of the Hill to Hill Bridge. These buildings are quite visible from the University viewpoint, and the highlighting of their façades and/or prominent architectural features will add to the overall aesthetic enjoyment of the city from this viewpoint.



**Figure 4.32**

From certain locations on campus, the Flat Iron Building can easily be picked out of the cityscape. The building's long flat side faces the University and would be appropriate for illumination. The strong roofline also qualifies for highlighting, especially since it is particularly visible from the higher elevations of campus.



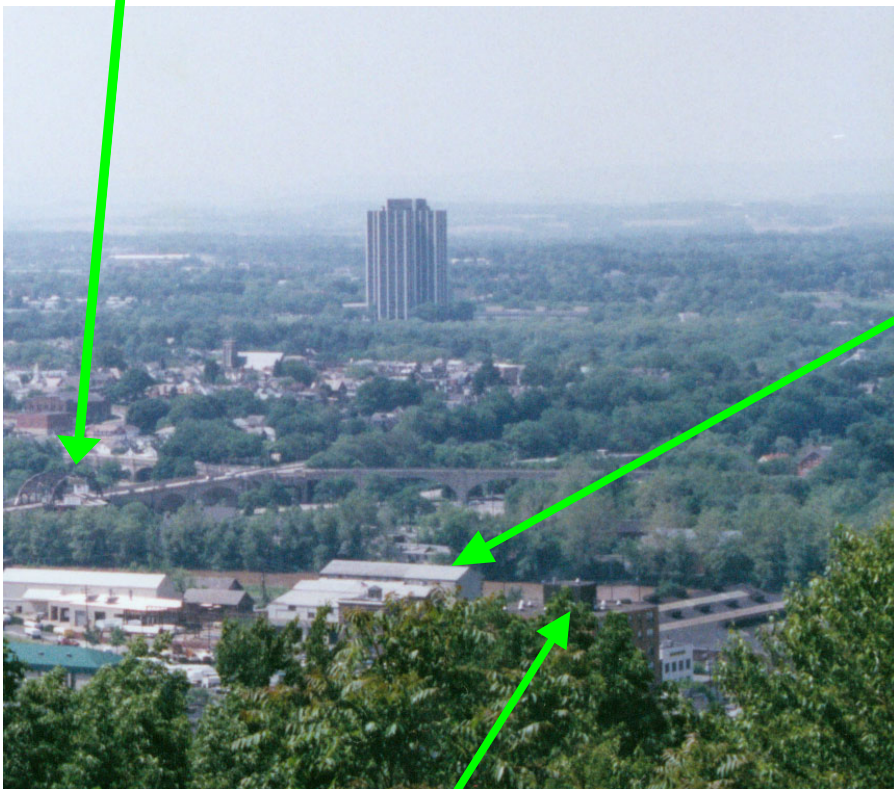
**Figure 4.31** *Flat Iron Building*





**Figure 4.33** *Hill to Hill Bridge*

The length of this structure makes it a prominent part of the city skyline as seen from the upper elevations of the University. Any lighting of the structure of the bridge will help to further establish it as a landmark at night. From this viewpoint, properly lighting the bridge will not necessarily draw visitors into the city, but it may help improve the overall image of the city when seen from the University.



**Figure 4.34** *Beth Works*

By virtue of sheer area, the buildings and equipment of Beth Works make it one of the most visible properties in all of South Bethlehem. There are many unique structural forms that would benefit from architectural highlighting. Lighting selected items from the Beth Works property will help draw attention to the source from which the city drew its livelihood for many years.



**Figure 4.35** *Rooney Building*

From the upper elevations of the Lehigh University campus, the Rooney Building can be seen towering over many of the smaller buildings downtown. Especially noticeable from here is the top of the building. Because of its deep setback from the edge of the building, the penthouse area on the roof could be highlighted in such a manner that it would be seen only from high elevations. Unnecessary attention wouldn't be drawn to an architecturally indistinct building, yet it would provide some visual variety to the University vista.









Figure 4.36

## FROM ST. MICHAEL'S CEMETERY

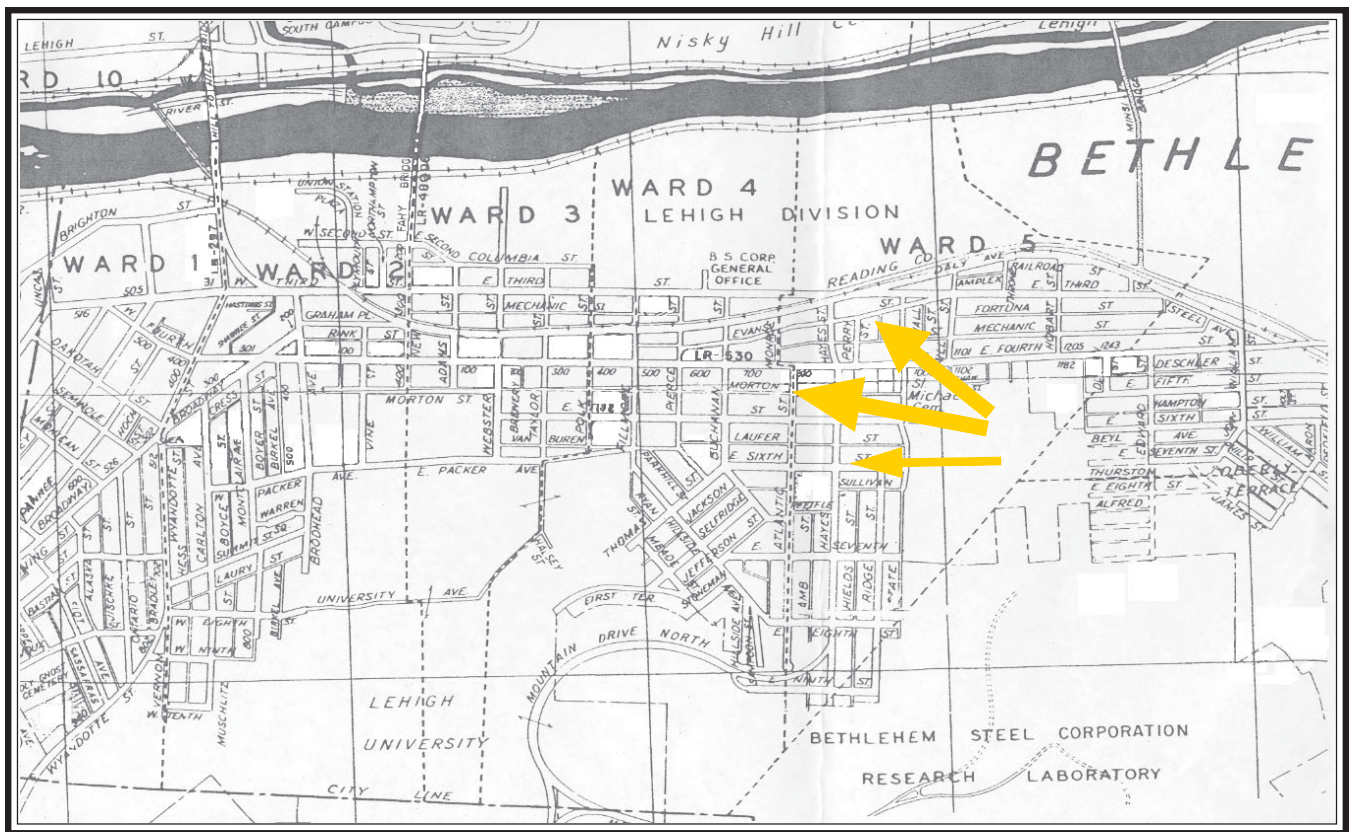
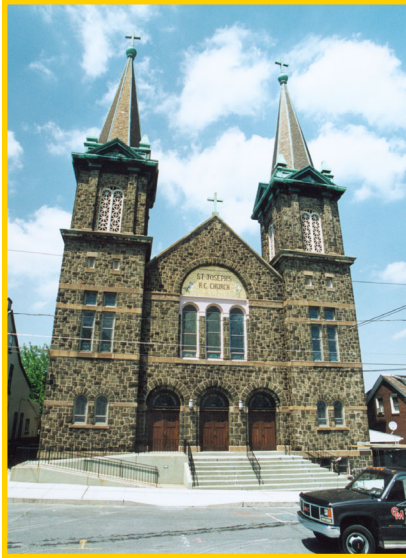


Figure 4.37

People entering South Bethlehem from the east along Fourth Street encounter St. Michael's Cemetery on the outskirts of the city. The high elevation and few visual obstructions of the cemetery offer a dramatic view of a large portion of South Bethlehem. This area of the city has an especially high population of religious structures. The architectural and ecclesiastical heritage of the neighborhood can be reinforced through the highlighting of certain features of these churches.

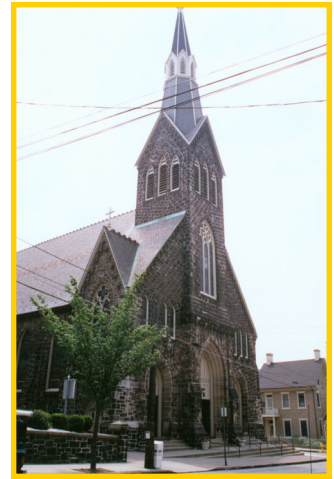




**Figure 4.40** St. Joseph's Church

St. Joseph's Church can easily be identified from this viewpoint due to its twin steeples; it is the only church with that characteristic. Lighting these steeples will continue this recognition into the night. Additional lighting of the stained glass windows or the stone façade could be applied to enhance the church's nighttime streetscape presence.

The tall, narrow steeple of the Holy Infancy Church distinguishes the church from among the others seen from this viewpoint. Highlighting this steeple is important not only for recognition of the Church, but also as a landmark for orientation at night. The steeple can be seen from many locations in the city, and illuminating it will aid visitors and residents alike in determining where in the city they are located.



**Figure 4.39** Holy Infancy Church



**Figure 4.41**

As occurs in all of the other vistas of the city, the Rooney Building is quite visible from St. Michael's Cemetery. And like the steeples of the churches along Fourth Street, illuminating the Rooney Building will further establish it as a landmark. Although lighting the façade of this building may not improve the aesthetics of the city skyline, it would help provide orientation at night.



**Figure 4.40** Rooney Building





The St. John's Windish Lutheran Church towers above its neighbors on a relatively empty part of Fourth Street. Lighting up the steeple would help reinforce its skyline presence at night. By illuminating the unique color of the steeple it has, people can easily identify it as belonging to the St. John's Windish Lutheran Church from. Softly lighting some of the low level features of the building would improve it's streetscape appearance.

**Figure 4.42** *St. John's Windish Lutheran Church*



**Figure 4.43** *Zion Hungarian Lutheran Church*

Located adjacent to the cemetery, the Zion Hungarian Lutheran Church is the most prominent of the churches seen from this viewpoint. It is the first church seen when entering town along Fourth Street. The eastern side, which faces the cemetery, and the steeple could be highlighted to give a favorable initial impression to visitors.



**Figure 4.44** *St. John's Capistrano Church*

St. John's Capistrano Church has a number of architectural details that would benefit from concentrated lighting. Highlighting these elements would enhance the overall streetscape presence of the church on Fourth Street. Illumination of the steeple and bell tower signifies the location of the church from farther distances.





